



Police Department

November 1, 2020

The holiday season is a time to celebrate with loved ones—and a time to shop. Crooks love the holidays as much as everyone else, especially because it is an opportune time for crime. During the holiday season, unsuspecting shoppers can easily fall victims to crimes like package theft, burglary, robbery, credit card fraud, or identity theft. In this month's edition, I would like to highlight some holiday shopping safety tips to protect yourself, your purchases, and your personal information.

While You're Shopping in Stores:

- Avoid carrying large amounts of cash. Stay alert and be aware of your surroundings for pickpockets and purse-snatchers.
- To avoid being a victim of "identity theft," be aware of exposing credit cards, debit cards, and other personal identification at the cash register and ATM's. Crooks can utilize cell phones to capture card information without your knowledge.
- Always park in well-lit areas and be sure to lock the car, close the windows, and hide shopping bags in the trunk.

While You're Online Shopping:

- Be wary of online deals that seem too good to be true (e.g. huge discounts on gift cards, Black Friday deals from an unfamiliar source). Do not provide your personal information to a suspicious online retailer.
- Be sure to check your credit card and bank statements frequently and confirm your payments. Report any discrepancy to your bank immediately.
- Don't let porch pirates ruin your holiday. Prevent package theft by having your packages shipped to your work, a friend, or a local post office if you cannot be present at the time of delivery. Install an outdoor security camera or keep your property well-lit to deter crooks from stealing your packages off your porch.

After You've Opened the Gifts:

- Burglars know that many families have new and expensive items in their homes following the holiday shopping season. Do not make it easy for burglars to target your homes by putting boxes that identify your new gifts in plain view.
- Update your home inventory. Take photos or videos of items, and list descriptions and serial numbers. In case of a burglary, having a detailed inventory can help identify stolen items.

The Chula Vista Police Department is dedicated to make sure that all the members of our community will have a safe, happy holiday season. Please remember to report any crimes or suspicious persons, and keep these tips in mind to stay safe while shopping for your loved ones.

Please let us know if there are specific public safety issues you would like us to evaluate in the future, or specific topics about which you would like more information. You can share your thoughts by contacting our Community Outreach team at (619) 691-5187 or by visiting our website at <https://www.chulavistaca.gov/departments/police-department/contact-us>.

Thank you in advance for your assistance,

Roxana Kennedy
Chief of Police